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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CHICAGO, May 3 --- U.S. Sen. Bob Dole (R-Kans.), who Sunday on "Face the Nation" (CBS) said he believed the President might end the war in Indochina before the end of this year, today in Chicago stood by his prediction saying that "American casualties in Indochina will soon approach the zero point."

Speaking at a luncheon meeting of the National Liquefied Petroleum Gas Association in Chicago today, Dole said:

The Vietnamese are taking up more and more of the combat burden of the war, just as they should. Our allies are doing their own fighting to a greater extent than ever before in the course of this long and bloody conflict. I am confident in my prediction --- in the very near future --- American casualties in Vietnam will be at or near the zero point.

The systematic Vietnamization of the war --- the strengthening of our allies, and the calm, orderly withdrawal of American troops under the President's direction --- mean that the war that was raging at full blast two years ago, is now being successfully wound down.

Indeed the progress toward ending American involvement in the war has been so successful to date that some people appear to be taking it for granted. They have forgotten where we stood two short years ago when Richard Nixon took office and inherited half a million American fighting men bogged down in Indochina.

The Kansas Senator said today he wished that some of the loudest critics of the Administration's policies in Indochina would "think calmly and clearly for a moment about the impact of their constant barrage of criticism." "All too often," Dole said, "the effect can only be to encourage the North Vietnamese and Viet Cong to make more unreasonable demands and to keep on fighting in the hope that political division on the home front will cause a collapse of American will and lead to a precipitate retreat instead of an orderly withdrawal."

Dole said he believed most Americans "have not and will not succumb to unfair criticisms of our policies." Dole warned, however:

But as long as the enemy does not realize this, it means that the road to peace in Indochina is going to be that much longer and more difficult.